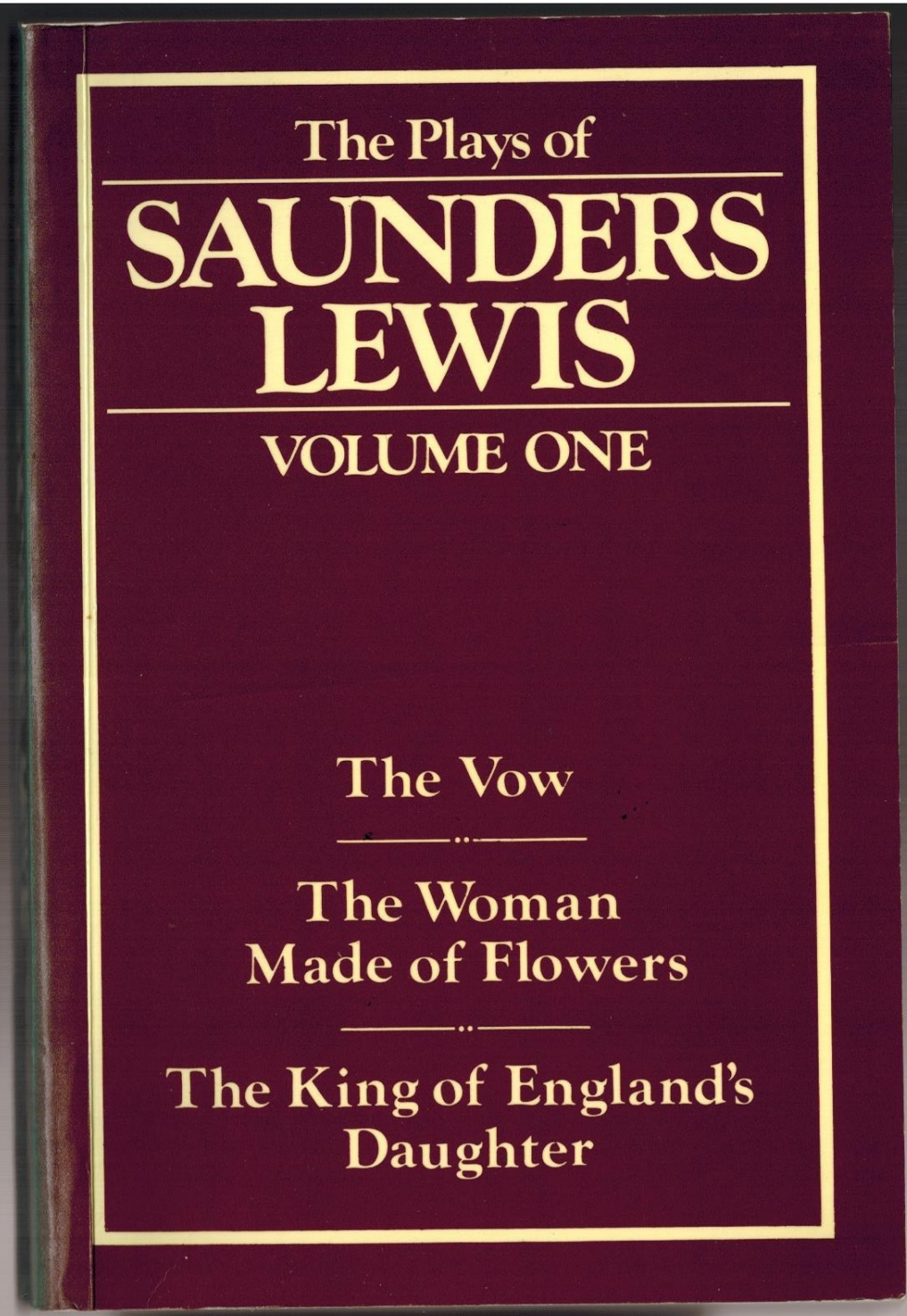

The Plays of
SAUNDERS LEWIS
VOLUME ONE
The Vow
The Woman Made of Flowers
The King of England's Daughter

The Plays Of Saunders Lewis

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

Also translated by Joseph P. Clancy:

VOLUME II

HAVE A CIGARETTE?
(Gymerwch chi Sigarét? 1955)
TREASON
(Brad, 1958)
ESTHER
(1959)

in preparation:

VOLUME III

EXCELSIOR
(1962)
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
(Problemau Prifysgol, 1962)
TOMORROW'S WALES
(Cymru Fydd, 1967)
ON THE TRAIN
(Yn y Trên, 1965)

VOLUME IV

THE DAUGHTER OF GWERN HYWEL
(Merch Gwern Hywel, 1964)
THE CONDEMNED CELL
(Cell y Grog, 1975)
THE TWO MARRIAGES OF ANN THOMAS
(Dwy Briodas Ann, 1973)

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

TRANSLATED FROM THE WELSH BY

JOSEPH P. CLANCY

VOLUME I

The Vow / *Amlyn ac Amig*
The Woman made of Flowers / *Blodeuwedd*
The King of England's Daughter / *Siwan*

Gwasg Dinefwr

'The Vow' first published 1940 in Welsh as
'Amlyn ac Amig' by Gwasg Aberystwyth
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1940
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

'The Woman Made of Flowers' first published 1948 in Welsh as
'Blodeuwedd' by Gwasg Gee
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1948
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

'The King of England's Daughter' first published 1956 in Welsh as
'Siwan' by Llyfrau'r Dryw (Christopher Davies [Publishers] Ltd.)
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1956
The Translation Copyright ©Joseph P. Clancy 1985

Published in 1985 by
Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd.
Rawlings Road, Llandybie, Carmarthenshire, SA18 3YD

Published and printed in 2002 by
Dinefwr Press Ltd.
Rawlings Road, Llandybie, Carmarthenshire, SA18 3YD

ISBN 0 9540569 4 9

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of Dinefwr Press Ltd.

Contents

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE 7

THE VOW 11
- ACT I 13
- ACT II 23
- ACT III 33

THE WOMAN MADE OF FLOWERS 45
- ACT I 49
- ACT II 62
- ACT III 75
- ACT IV 84

THE KING OF ENGLAND'S DAUGHTER 99
- ACT I 103
- ACT II 122
- ACT III 135

APPENDIX 153

Translator's Preface

Saunders Lewis (b. 1893) is, quite simply, the foremost dramatist to have written in the Welsh language. Indeed, in the absence of a strong native tradition, he may almost be said to have invented a dramatic literature for Welsh-speaking Wales, drawing eclectically upon chiefly European modes, traditional and modern, to create theatrical works of art for a culture that for much of his career had no professional theatre. The reader will find in these volumes an ample selection that shows his diversity and development as a playwright, and his continuing exploration of the conditions and consequences of choice, the tensions between *eros* and *agape*, and what William James called "the will to believe".

But these translations are intended not simply to be read, but to provide scripts for theatrical production, for the English-language audiences of Wales and elsewhere, not least my own United States. I have therefore been particularly conscious of Saunders Lewis' own statement that "audible rhythms and the music of speech are of necessity called for in the theatre", a statement which applies equally to his earlier plays in verse, the often heightened prose of his plays of the 1950s, and the more colloquial prose of the later works. I have tried in style to be both faithful to each of the original works and accessible, without excessive Americanisms, to audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. In a very few instances I have dropped or transmuted expressions or allusions incomprehensible to a Welshless audience.

The plays set in the Wales of the 1960s pose special problems, or so at least it seems to a non-Welsh translator, because of the nation's modern bi-lingualism. Must these characters be presented as speaking the English they would also use every day, or may the translator, while trying to avoid the effect of "quaintness" that has

THE VOW

Amlyn ac Amig

(1940)

Amlyn ac Amig, here translated as *The Vow*, was written for radio in 1940. In his preface to the published play, which he subtitled "A Comedy", Saunders Lewis noted that it was based on a medieval tale translated from Latin into Welsh in the fifteenth century, that the original story had nothing to do with Christmas, and that whereas Amig was the focus of that story, it is the crisis and conversion of Amlyn that is central to the play. The reader may be familiar with the central characters as "Amis and Amile" — the tale belongs to "the matter of France", romances connected to the court of Charlemagne, whose daughter Amig had won for his friend by taking his place in a duel five years before the events of the drama.

The play can be readily produced for the theatre with some imaginative use of a relatively bare stage, the use of the household servants as the "choir", and perhaps the substitution of appropriate medieval carols for several of the songs. I have preferred to leave potential directors free to devise adaptations rather than to alter the script for this purpose.

CHARACTERS

Amlyn, Earl of Normandy
Belisent, his wife
Their two sons
Amig, an Earl, Amlyn's friend
Poet
Fool
Porter
Women servants
A choir

The drama takes place in a castle in Normandy, centuries ago, between Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning.

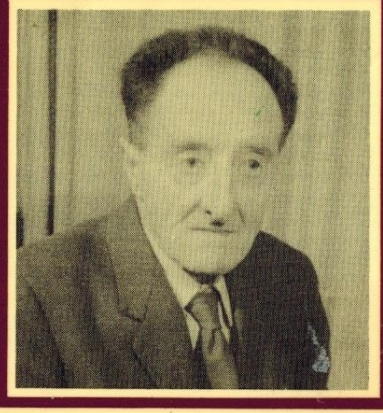
I

AMLYN: Is the door shut, porter?
PORTER: Yes, Lord Amlyn.
AMLYN: The tables are bare and there's not a sound from the kitchen.
BELISENT: A light supper tonight, my lord.
FOOL: All the meat and drink in the house
Wouldn't fill the belly of a mouse.
AMLYN: The wait is short now until midnight mass.
Gluttony is no way to prepare to greet the Christ Child.
FOOL: He put Lent before Christmas, blast the pope's eyes;
Why must we always perish to reach paradise?
BELISENT: I shall keep some food and wine ready, Amlyn,
Lest a stranger come late
And knock like Mary and Joseph on the doors of Bethlehem.
AMLYN: You are the best of wives, Belisent: your words are wise.
And you, the candles of our altar,
My two dear sons, the two eyes of your mother,
You will be up early tomorrow to praise the manger
And sing carols to Christ in the hay:
So to bed now, you rascals.
FOOL: Away with the food, away with the wine,
Away with the children and grey Advent time.
BELISENT: It is a custom, dear husband, for the children on Christmas Eve
To light a candle and place it in the window;
Since who knows if He will not come tonight as He

SAUNDERS LEWIS is that rarity, the writer of the century. More than that, as far as Wales is concerned, in the absence of a native tradition, he has invented a dramatic literature for Welsh-speaking Wales so distinguished in its quality as to reside unself-consciously beside all others.

The diversity of his range and his development in the theatrical craft are brilliantly and faithfully re-created for the English-speaking world here by Joseph Clancy. The 'audible rhythms and the music of speech' that 'are of necessity called-for in the theatre', are everywhere present — so that these translations, though loyal in style, expression and allusion to the original — are designed for actors in performance as well as for readers of the printed page.

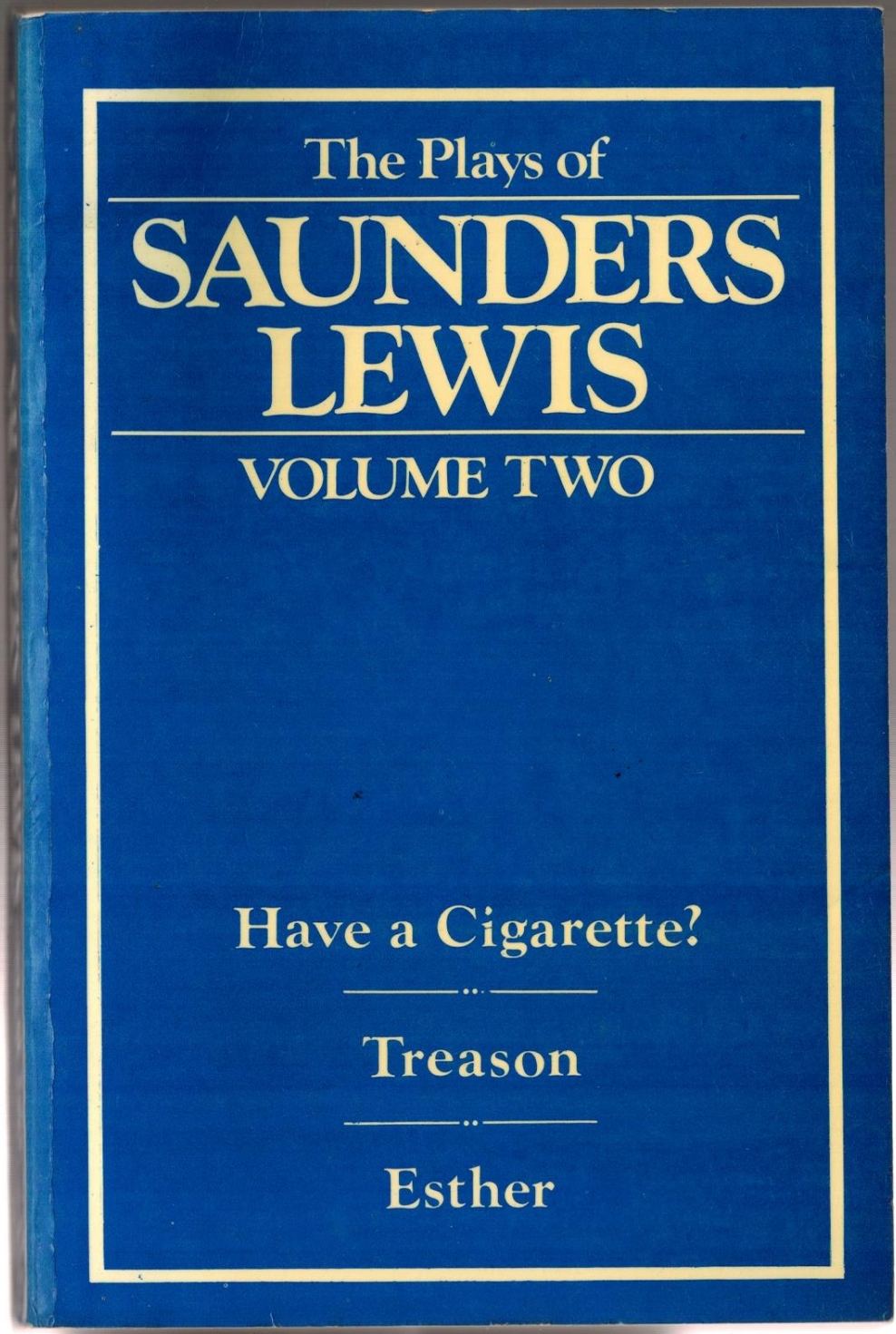
JOSEPH P. CLANCY is Professor of English Literature and Theatre Arts at Marymount Manhanttan College, New York City, and has directed plays for college and community theatre. He holds his Ph.D. from Forham University. He has published three anthologies of his translations from the Welsh, *Medieval Welsh Lyrics, The Earliest Welsh Poetry,* and the recent *Twentieth Century Welsh Poems,* and edited *Living a Life,* a selection of poems by Gwyn Thomas with translations by the poet and the editor. He received a Welsh Arts Council Literature Prize for *The Earliest Welsh Poetry* and was elected to the English Language Section of *Yr Academi Gymreig* in 1971.



£5.95

ISBN 0-9540569-4-9

9 780954 056940


The Plays of
SAUNDERS LEWIS
VOLUME TWO
Have a Cigarette?
Treason
Esther

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

Also translated by Joseph P. Clancy:

VOLUME I

THE VOW
(Amlyn ac Amig)
THE WOMAN MADE OF FLOWERS
(Blodeuwedd)
THE KING OF ENGLAND'S DAUGHTER
(Siwan)

in preparation:

VOLUME III

EXCELSIOR
(1962)
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
(Problemau Prifysgol, 1962)
TOMORROW'S WALES
(Cymru Fydd, 1967)
ON THE TRAIN
(Yn y Trên, 1965)

VOLUME IV

THE DAUGHTER OF GWERN HYWEL
(Merch Gwern Hywel, 1964)
THE CONDEMNED CELL
(Cell y Grog, 1975)
THE TWO MARRIAGES OF ANN THOMAS
(Dwy Briodas Ann, 1973)

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

TRANSLATED FROM THE WELSH BY

JOSEPH P. CLANCY

VOLUME II

Christopher Davies

'Have a Cigarette?' first published 1956 in Welsh as
'Gymerwch Chi Sigarét?' by Llyfrau'r Dryw
(Christopher Davies [Publishers] Ltd.)
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1956
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

'Treason' first published 1958 in Welsh as
'Brad' by Llyfrau'r Dryw (Christopher Davies [Publishers] Ltd.)
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1958
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

'Esther' first published 1960 in Welsh
by Llyfrau'r Dryw (Christopher Davies [Publishers] Ltd.)
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1960
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

This edition first published 1985 by
Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd.
Rawlings Road, Llandybie
Dyfed, SA18 3YD

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd.

ISBN 0 7154 0648 5

Printed in Wales by
Salesbury Press Ltd.
Llandybie, Dyfed

Published with the support of the Welsh Arts Council

Contents

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE 7

HAVE A CIGARETTE? 11

ACT I 13
ACT II 33
ACT III 52

TREASON 67

ACT I 72
ACT II 93
ACT III 114

ESTHER 133

ACT I 135
ACT II 153
ACT III 171

Translator's Preface

Saunders Lewis (b. 1893) is, quite simply, the foremost dramatist to have written in the Welsh language. Indeed, in the absence of a strong native tradition, he may almost be said to have invented a dramatic literature for Welsh-speaking Wales, drawing eclectically upon chiefly European modes, traditional and modern, to create theatrical works of art for a culture that for much of his career had no professional theatre. The reader will find in these volumes an ample selection that shows his diversity and development as a playwright, and his continuing exploration of the conditions and consequences of choice, the tensions between *eros* and *agape*, and what William James called "the will to believe".

But these translations are intended not simply to be read, but to provide scripts for theatrical production, for the English-language audiences of Wales and elsewhere, not least my own United States. I have therefore been particularly conscious of Saunders Lewis' own statement that "audible rhythms and the music of speech are of necessity called for in the theatre", a statement which applies equally to his earlier plays in verse, the often heightened prose of his plays of the 1950s, and the more colloquial prose of the later works. I have tried in style to be both faithful to each of the original works and accessible, without excessive Americanisms, to audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. In a very few instances I have dropped or transmuted expressions or allusions incomprehensible to a Welshless audience.

The plays set in the Wales of the 1960s pose special problems, or so at least it seems to a non-Welsh translator, because of the nation's modern bi-lingualism. Must these characters be presented as speaking the English they would also use every day, or may the translator, while trying to avoid the effect of "quaintness" that has

HAVE A CIGARETTE?

(*Gymerwch Chi Sigaret?* 1955)

It may be of interest that *Gymerwch Chi Sigaret?* had its origins in the true story of a pregnant young Catholic woman whose Communist husband, because of his wife's religious convictions, chose to defect to the West rather than carry out a political assassination.

"Her terrifying choice," Saunders Lewis wrote in his preface to the play, is "the historical fact on which the drama is based." He maintained that it was not his intention to persuade the audience of the truth of Iris' religious beliefs, or to stage a debate between Catholicism and Communism (as some reviewers had alleged), but to show how Iris' faith "together with her love drove her and her husband to decisions that form a tragedy and so reveal the strange and awesome greatness of human nature." He added that it is "in tragedy, and only in tragedy, [that] one can see providence fulfilling everything this side of the veil."

CHARACTERS

Iris
Mark
Callista
Phygas
Captain Christopher

Time: 1948

Scenes: Act I. A flat in a capital city in Eastern Europe.
Act II. A flat in Vienna, two days later.
Act III. The same, six hours later.

ACT I

A flat in a capital city in Eastern Europe. The flat is on the ground floor and the street is seen unclearly through the windows. There is very little furniture but each piece is carefully selected, like the French sofa in 1830 style, a combination of poverty and good taste. On the wall near the door there is an ikon: a picture on wood of the Madonna and Child. On the back of this there is a picture of the Communist symbol, the hammer and sickle: that is what is shown most often. There are no other pictures.

When the curtain rises the ikon of the Madonna and Child is what is visible. Iris is turning in a slow dance by herself, and the gramophone on the table is playing the waltz from Der Rosenkavalier, *when Mark enters.*

IRIS: Mark! Oh how lovely, how lovely . . . Come dance with me, right now . . . waltz with me. This is heaven . . .
(Both of them sing while dancing to the music.)
(Merry laughter)

MARK: You know, waltzing before taking off my overcoat is worse than packdrill in the army.

IRIS: You poor sweaty little soldier! Take off your hat and coat and give them to me.

MARK: There you are. Whew! *(Mark turns off the gramophone as she puts away his hat and coat.)*

IRIS: I couldn't help it. I had to express my joy. It's only four o'clock. I wasn't expecting you for another two hours.

MARK: Must I dance then from now until six?

IRIS: No, we'll talk too. I was longing for your company.

MARK: That's why the ikon on the wall is facing outwards, I suppose.

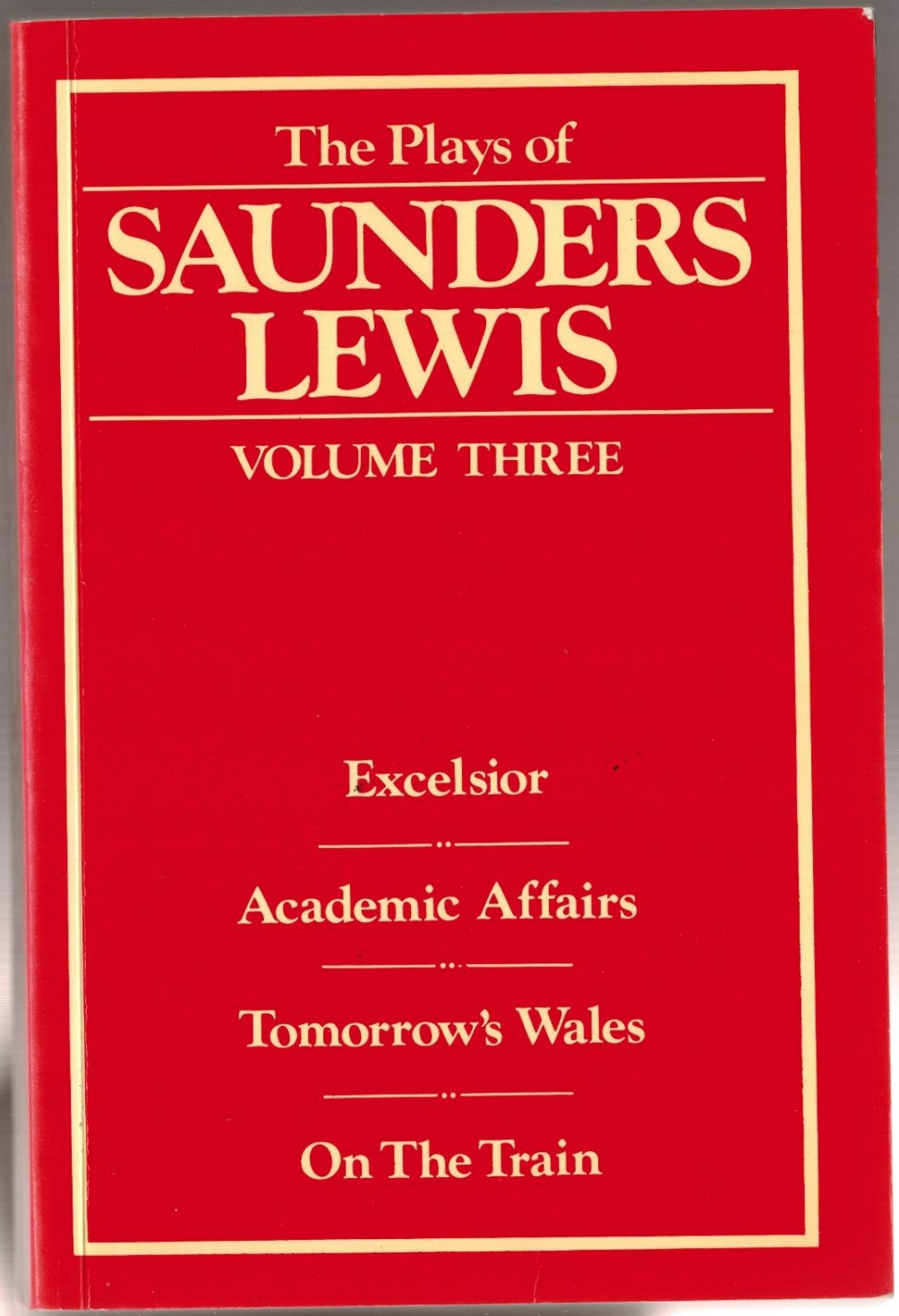
SAUNDERS LEWIS is that rarity, the writer of the century. More than that, as far as Wales is concerned, in the absence of a native tradition, he has invented a dramatic literature for Welsh-speaking Wales so distinguished in its quality as to reside unself-consciously beside all others.

The diversity of his range and his development in the theatrical craft are brilliantly and faithfully re-created for the English-speaking world here by Joseph Clancy. The 'audible rhythms and the music of speech' that 'are of necessity called-for in the theatre', are everywhere present — so that these translations, though loyal in style, expression and allusion to the original — are designed for actors in performance as well as for readers of the printed page.

JOSEPH P. CLANCY is Professor of English Literature and Theatre Arts at Marymount Manhanttan College, New York City, and has directed plays for college and community theatre. He holds his Ph.D. from Forham University. He has published three anthologies of his translations from the Welsh, *Medieval Welsh Lyrics, The Earliest Welsh Poetry,* and the recent *Twentieth Century Welsh Poems,* and edited *Living a Life,* a selection of poems by Gwyn Thomas with translations by the poet and the editor. He received a Welsh Arts Council Literature Prize for *The Earliest Welsh Poetry* and was elected to the English Language Section of *Yr Academi Gymreig* in 1971.

£5.95

ISBN 0 7154 0648 5


The Plays of
SAUNDERS LEWIS
VOLUME THREE
Excelsior
Academic Affairs
Tomorrow's Wales
On The Train

00016316

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

CSTA CRAIG CAMPUS LIBRARY

CSTA CRAIG CAMPUS LIBRARY

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

Also translated by Joseph P. Clancy:

VOLUME I

THE VOW
(Amlyn ac Amig)
THE WOMAN MADE OF FLOWERS
(Blodeuwedd)
THE KING OF ENGLAND'S DAUGHTER
(Siwan)

VOLUME II

HAVE A CIGARETTE?
(Gymerwch Chi Sigarét? 1955)
TREASON
(Brad, 1958)
ESTHER
(1959)

in preparation:

VOLUME IV

THE DAUGHTER OF GWERN HYWEL
(Merch Gwern Hywel, 1964)
THE CONDEMNED CELL
(Cell y Grog, 1975)
THE TWO MARRIAGES OF ANN THOMAS
(Dwy Briodas Ann, 1973)

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

TRANSLATED FROM THE WELSH BY

JOSEPH P. CLANCY

VOLUME III

CCTA GRAIG CAMPUS
LIBRARY

Gwasg Dinefwr

'Excelsior' first published 1980 in Welsh
by Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd.
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1980
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

'Academic Affairs' first published 1968 in Welsh as
'Problemau Prifysgol' by Llyfrau'r Dryw (Christopher Davies [Publishers] Ltd.)
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1968
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

'Tomorrow's Wales' first published 1967 in Welsh as
'Cymru Fydd' by Llyfrau'r Dryw (Christopher Davies [Publishers] Ltd.)
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1967
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

'On the Train' first published 1965 in Welsh as
'Yn y Trên' by 'Barn' (Christopher Davies [Publishers] Ltd.)
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1965
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

Published in 1985 by
Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd.
Rawlings Road, Llandybie, Carmarthenshire, SA18 3YD

Published and printed in 2002 by
Dinefwr Press Ltd.
Rawlings Road, Llandybie, Carmarthenshire, SA18 3YD

ISBN 0 9540569 5 7

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of Dinefwr Press Ltd.

Contents

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE 7

EXCELSIOR 11
ACT I 17
ACT II 33
ACT III 50

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS 65
ACT I 68
ACT II 94

TOMORROW'S WALES 117
ACT I 120
ACT II 142
ACT III 160

ON THE TRAIN 177

APPENDIX 195

Translator's Preface

Saunders Lewis (b. 1893) is, quite simply, the foremost dramatist to have written in the Welsh language. Indeed, in the absence of a strong native tradition, he may almost be said to have invented a dramatic literature for Welsh-speaking Wales, drawing eclectically upon chiefly European modes, traditional and modern, to create theatrical works of art for a culture that for much of his career had no professional theatre. The reader will find in these volumes an ample selection that shows his diversity and development as a playwright, and his continuing exploration of the conditions and consequences of choice, the tensions between *eros* and *agape*, and what William James called "the will to believe".

But these translations are intended not simply to be read, but to provide scripts for theatrical production, for the English-language audiences of Wales and elsewhere, not least my own United States. I have therefore been particularly conscious of Saunders Lewis' own statement that "audible rhythms and the music of speech are of necessity called for in the theatre", a statement which applies equally to his earlier plays in verse, the often heightened prose of his plays of the 1950s, and the more colloquial prose of the later works. I have tried in style to be both faithful to each of the original works and accessible, without excessive Americanisms, to audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. In a very few instances I have dropped or transmuted expressions or allusions incomprehensible to a Welshless audience.

The plays set in the Wales of the 1960s pose special problems, or so at least it seems to a non-Welsh translator, because of the nation's modern bi-lingualism. Must these characters be presented as speaking the English they would also use every day, or may the translator, while trying to avoid the effect of "quaintness" that has

EXCELSIOR

(1962)

When the Conservative Party ("Tories") was in power in 1951, it established a ministry for Welsh affairs. Creating a Secretary of State for Wales was part of the Labour Party's platform in the early 1960s, and the office was established after Labour won the general election in 1964.

The television programme *Coronation Street*, referred to in *Excelsior*, is a long-running English "soap-opera". Welsh-language broadcasting on radio and television was available for only a few hours a week before Welsh-medium radio began in the late 1970s and a primarily Welsh-medium television channel was opened in 1982, after two decades of intense controversy.

CHARACTERS

Hugh Hughes, a Member of Parliament for the Labour Party
Maggie, his wife
Dot, his daughter
The Reverend Christmas Jones, a young clergyman
Dic Sarc

The action takes place during one evening in the comfortably furnished flat of the Hughes family in London. Acts I and II are set in the parlour room of the flat; Act III in the room Hugh Hughes employs as an office.

ACT I

Maggie Hughes is on the sofa in the parlour, and Dot, in expensively bohemian jeans and silk jumper, stands leaning against the doorpost.

DOT: Oh Mam!
MAGGIE: Hello, Dot.
DOT: Oh, Mam dear!
MAGGIE: Yes, and so?
DOT: Oh Mam!
MAGGIE: I've never denied it.
DOT: *(Moving slowly into the room as though in a dream)* I'm helpless! . . . *(She dances a step or two)* . . . I'm drunk, Mam! I'm reeling!
MAGGIE: *(Quite calm)* Cheers.
DOT: Have you ever been drunk?
MAGGIE: Perhaps, long ago, by accident.
DOT: I don't believe it! . . . *(Another little dance)* I'm drunk now. Not by accident! Tremendously drunk on new wine!
MAGGIE: What did you have?
DOT: An address! A speech! Eloquent, bold, brave, masterful! A call to Wales! A vision!
MAGGIE: Strong drink.
DOT: The cream of eloquence! The best political address I've ever heard! Really, I tell you, really, an inspired speech.
MAGGIE: Has he asked you to marry him?
DOT: That's too bad of you, Mam. It was a political address!
MAGGIE: Of course it was a political address. That's how I married your father.
DOT: Daddy? Oh dear, dear, dear Mam! This was totally different.

o: the vowel-sounds in 'roll' and (British) 'hot'.

u: pronounced like the Welsh 'i'. Never used as in English spelling.

w: the vowel-sounds in 'tool' and 'took'. English 'fool' becomes Welsh 'ffŵl'. The letter is also used consonantally as in English, 'dwelling', 'Gwen'.

y: in most monosyllables and in final syllables pronounced like the Welsh 'i'; in other syllables it stands for the vowel sound in 'up', and this is also its sound in a few monosyllables like 'y' and 'yr'.

The following diphthongs are used in Welsh; the chief vowel comes first:

ae, ai, au: the diphthong sound in 'write'.

ei, eu, ey: 'uh-ee'.

aw: the diphthong sound in 'prowl'.

ew: the short Welsh 'e' followed by 'oo'.

iw, yw: 'ee-oo'.

wy: 'oo-ee'.

oe, oi, ou: the sound in 'oil'.

The accent in Welsh is placed, with few exceptions, on the penult: Llýwarch, Llywélyn.

CYTA GRAIG CAMPUS LIBRARY

SAUNDERS LEWIS is that rarity, the writer of the century. More than that, as far as Wales is concerned, in the absence of a native tradition, he has invented a dramatic literature for Welsh-speaking Wales so distinguished in its quality as to reside unself-consciously beside all others.

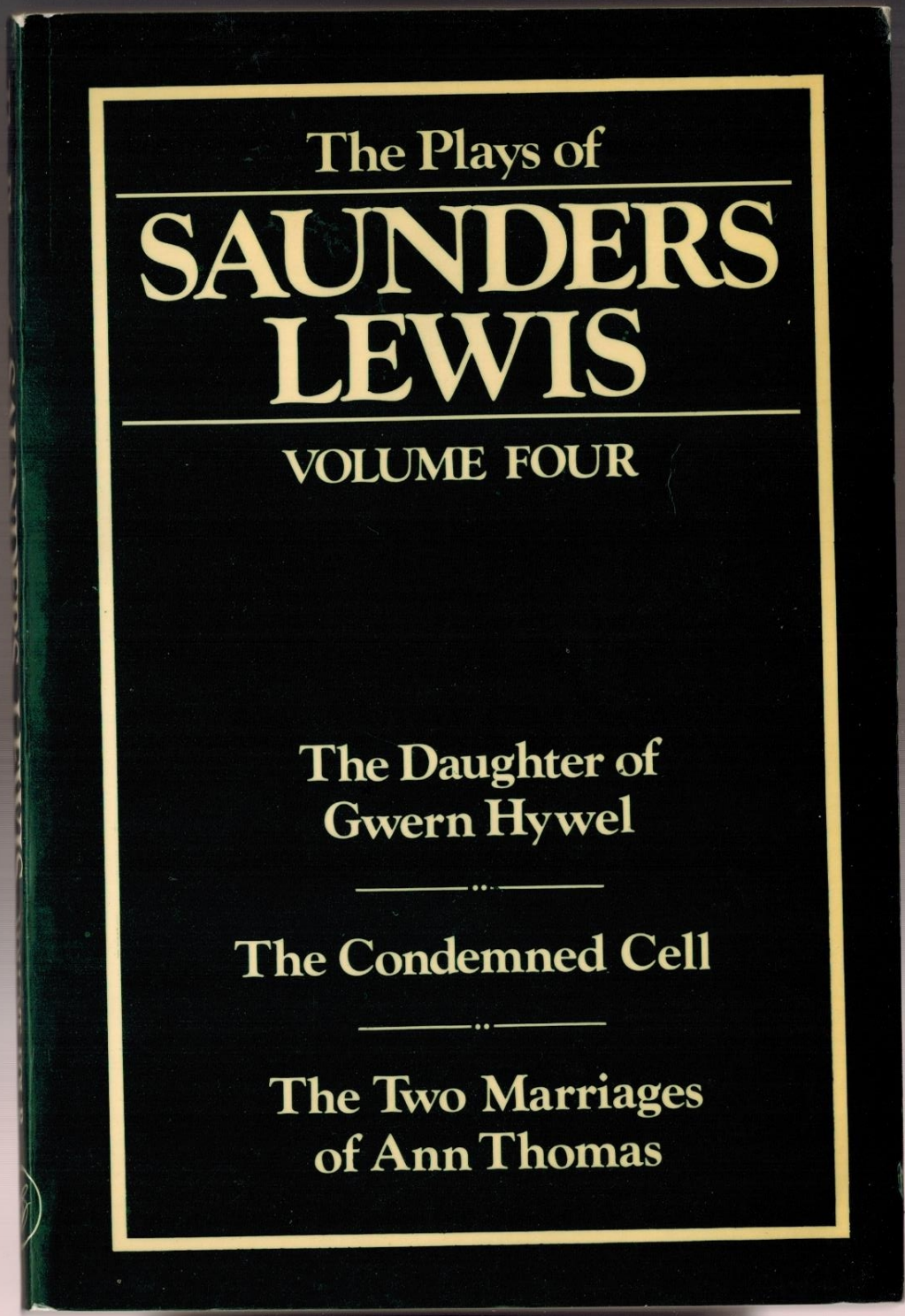
The diversity of his range and his development in the theatrical craft are brilliantly and faithfully re-created for the English-speaking world here by Joseph Clancy. The 'audible rhythms and the music of speech' that 'are of necessity called-for in the theatre', are everywhere present — so that these translations, though loyal in style, expression and allusion to the original — are designed for actors in performance as well as for readers of the printed page.

JOSEPH P. CLANCY is Professor of English Literature and Theatre Arts at Marymount Manhattan College, New York City, and has directed plays for college and community theatre. He holds his Ph.D. from Forham University. He has published three anthologies of his translations from the Welsh, *Medieval Welsh Lyrics, The Earliest Welsh Poetry,* and the recent *Twentieth Century Welsh Poems,* and edited *Living a Life,* a selection of poems by Gwyn Thomas with translations by the poet and the editor. He received a Welsh Arts Council Literature Prize for *The Earliest Welsh Poetry* and was elected to the English Language Section of *Yr Academi Gymreig* in 1971.

£5.95

ISBN 0-9540569-5-7

9 780954 056957


The Plays of
SAUNDERS LEWIS
VOLUME FOUR
The Daughter of Gwern Hywel
The Condemned Cell
The Two Marriages of Ann Thomas

00016317

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

LIBRARY

LIBRARY

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

Also translated by Joseph P. Clancy:

VOLUME I

THE VOW
(Amlyn ac Amig)
THE WOMAN MADE OF FLOWERS
(Blodeuwedd)
THE KING OF ENGLAND'S DAUGHTER
(Siwan)

VOLUME II

HAVE A CIGARETTE?
(Gymerwch Chi Sigarét? 1955)
TREASON
(Brad, 1958)
ESTHER
(1959)

VOLUME III

EXCELSIOR
(1962)
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
(Problemau Prifysgol, 1962)
TOMORROW'S WALES
(Cymru Fydd, 1967)
ON THE TRAIN
(Yn y Trên, 1965)

THE PLAYS OF SAUNDERS LEWIS

TRANSLATED FROM THE WELSH BY

JOSEPH P. CLANCY

VOLUME IV

CRAIG CAMPUS LIBRARY

Christopher Davies

'The Daughter of Gwern Hywel' first published 1964 in Welsh as
'Merch Gwern Hywel' Llyfrau'r Dryw (Christopher Davies [Publishers] Ltd.)
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1964
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

'The Condemned Cell' first published 1975 in Welsh as
'Cell y Grog' in 'Taliesin', Vol. 31, by Gwasg John Penry
Copyright © Saunders Lewis 1975
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

'The Two Marriages of Ann Thomas' first published 1975 in Welsh as
'Dwy Briodas Ann' by Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd.
Copyright ©Saunders Lewis 1975
The Translation Copyright © Joseph P. Clancy 1985

This edition first published 1986 by
Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd
Rawlings Road, Llandybïe
Dyfed, SA18 3YD

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd.

ISBN 0 7154 0652 3

Printed in Wales by
Dynevor Printing Company
Rawlings Road
Llandybïe, Dyfed

Published with the support of the Welsh Arts Council.

Contents

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE 7

THE DAUGHTER OF GWERN HYWEL 11

I. TEA IN YSBYTY IFAN 18
II. SUPPER 30
III. BALA 39
IV. TROUBLE 46
V. MRS. ELIAS 55
VI. THE ASSOCIATION OF BALA 1817 62
VII. RHUTHUN 69
VIII. THE MARCHIONESS 75

THE CONDEMNED CELL 83

THE TWO MARRIAGES OF ANN THOMAS 99

SCENE I 102
SCENE II 112
SCENE III 117
SCENE IV 122

APPENDIX 132

Translator's Preface

Saunders Lewis (b. 1893) is, quite simply, the foremost dramatist to have written in the Welsh language. Indeed, in the absence of a strong native tradition, he may almost be said to have invented a dramatic literature for Welsh-speaking Wales, drawing eclectically upon chiefly European modes, traditional and modern, to create theatrical works of art for a culture that for much of his career had no professional theatre. The reader will find in these volumes an ample selection that shows his diversity and development as a playwright, and his continuing exploration of the conditions and consequences of choice, the tensions between *eros* and *agape*, and what William James called "the will to believe".

But these translations are intended not simply to be read, but to provide scripts for theatrical production, for the English-language audiences of Wales and elsewhere, not least my own United States. I have therefore been particularly conscious of Saunders Lewis' own statement that "audible rhythms and the music of speech are of necessity called for in the theatre", a statement which applies equally to his earlier plays in verse, the often heightened prose of his plays of the 1950s, and the more colloquial prose of the later works. I have tried in style to be both faithful to each of the original works and accessible, without excessive Americanisms, to audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. In a very few instances I have dropped or transmuted expressions or allusions incomprehensible to a Welshless audience.

The plays set in the Wales of the 1960s pose special problems, or so at least it seems to a non-Welsh translator, because of the nation's modern bi-lingualism. Must these characters be presented as speaking the English they would also use every day, or may the translator, while trying to avoid the effect of "quaintness" that has

THE DAUGHTER OF GWERN HYWEL

An Historical Romance

(1964)

Blessings upon Gwern Hywel
And its glades beneath the dew
Where she on whom my sad thoughts dwell
Played in her life's morn . . .
May clover grow on the borders
Of the dear paths she walked
That she might drink full measure
Of Calvary's herbal wine.

excerpt from William Roberts' elegy
for his wife who died January 11, 1864.

I. TEA IN YSBYTY IFAN

Monday afternoon, the seventeenth of June in the year 1816. At the parlour window of Gwern Hywel stood the woman of the house, looking at the rain falling. With her was the Reverend John Roberts, Llangwm, a short man, strong of body, strong-jawed, sixty-three years old but with no sign of the weakness of old age on either his body or his face. Behind them stood Sarah Jones, the elder daughter of Gwern Hywel, twenty-six years old, but in contrast to the usual farm women of the period, looking younger.

— They'll be soaked, said Mrs Jones.

— You haven't started on the hay yet?

— Dear Lord, Mr Roberts, we won't have the hay until August, if at all this year.

— Indeed it's been a dreadful, dreadful summer.

— No summer at all. It hasn't been summer since the war ended.

— Very true. Nor spring either.

— There are farmers here in Ysbyty Ifan about to go bankrupt.

— It's a bog everywhere but the main road.

— There'll be no way they can cross the mountain tomorrow. They'll have to take the upper road through Cerrig.

— If so they'll need to start very early. Are you coming too, Mrs Jones?

— Hardly. I've promised Sarah here that she might go for one day, Wednesday. We can't both of us go and leave the farm at this time of year.

— Let's pray there's fair weather for the preaching.

— There go the children, starting home from school.

— Only some five of them. Who's the teacher?

— A young lad who has cancer. He can't work. So the vicar — Gwallter Mechain, you know — gave him permission to open a

school in the church porch. He can read and write pretty well. He keeps those little ones from getting up to mischief.

— But you have a Sunday School here?

— In Sbyty? We're a small party, we Methodists, in Ysbyty Ifan.

— I know. The family of Gwern Hywel is the only wealthy family we have. Thanks be to Providence that you support the cause . . . There now, the shower's over.

— It's stormy weather for Methodism too, Mr Roberts.

John Roberts stood a few moments before answering:

— I'm anxious about these Anglesey men, Christmas Evans and John Elias . . . 'Who will put down the great men of Môn?'

— You'll see at Bala tomorrow.

— A year ago tomorrow was the battle of Waterloo . . . You know, John Elias is like a Napoleon in the pulpit.

Mrs Jones looked at him:

— High praise from the brother of Robert Roberts.

For the first time Sarah Jones interrupted the talk:

— Will it be he or Mr Jones, Dinbych, meets his Waterloo tomorrow?

John Roberts turned to her earnestly:

— Poor Thomas Jones. He talks of coming to Bala tomorrow to bid farewell to the Methodists.

Sarah answered in her low voice:

— That wouldn't be bidding farewell to Methodism — it would be taking Methodism away from us.

— He's to preach at the ten o'clock service Wednesday morning.

— I hope to be there.

— That may be his last sermon if the Association doesn't take his side.

They heard the sound of horses approaching. Then two riders in black great-coats came in sight. The stable boy came into the yard and held the bridle of the leading horse. Its rider alighted deliberately, a tall, well-built man, well-clothed. John Roberts gazed at him and said:

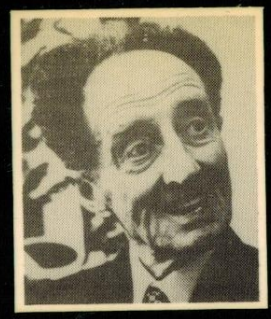
— John Elias does everything with the same dignity. He descends from his horse as he descends from the pulpit.

— It's easy to see what sort of wife he has, said Mrs Jones, he's learned to be a gentleman.

Sarah laughed unexpectedly behind her and asked:

LIBRARY

LIBRARY



SAUNDERS LEWIS is that rarity, the writer of the century. More than that, as far as Wales is concerned, in the absence of a native tradition, he has invented a dramatic literature for Welsh-speaking Wales so distinguished in its quality as to reside unself-consciously beside all others.

The diversity of his range and his development in the theatrical craft are brilliantly and faithfully re-created for the English-speaking world here by Joseph Clancy. The 'audible rhythms and the music of speech' that 'are of necessity called-for in the theatre', are everywhere present — so that these translations, though loyal in style, expression and allusion to the original — are designed for actors in performance as well as for readers of the printed page.

JOSEPH P. CLANCY is Professor of English Literature and Theatre Arts at Marymount Manhattan College, New York City, and has directed plays for college and community theatre. He holds his Ph.D. from Forham University. He has published three anthologies of his translations from the Welsh, *Medieval Welsh Lyrics, The Earliest Welsh Poetry,* and the recent *Twentieth Century Welsh Poems,* and edited *Living a Life,* a selection of poems by Gwyn Thomas with translations by the poet and the editor. He received a Welsh Arts Council Literature Prize for *The Earliest Welsh Poetry* and was elected to the English Language Section of *Yr Academi Gymreig* in 1971.

£5.95

ISBN 0 7154 0652 3